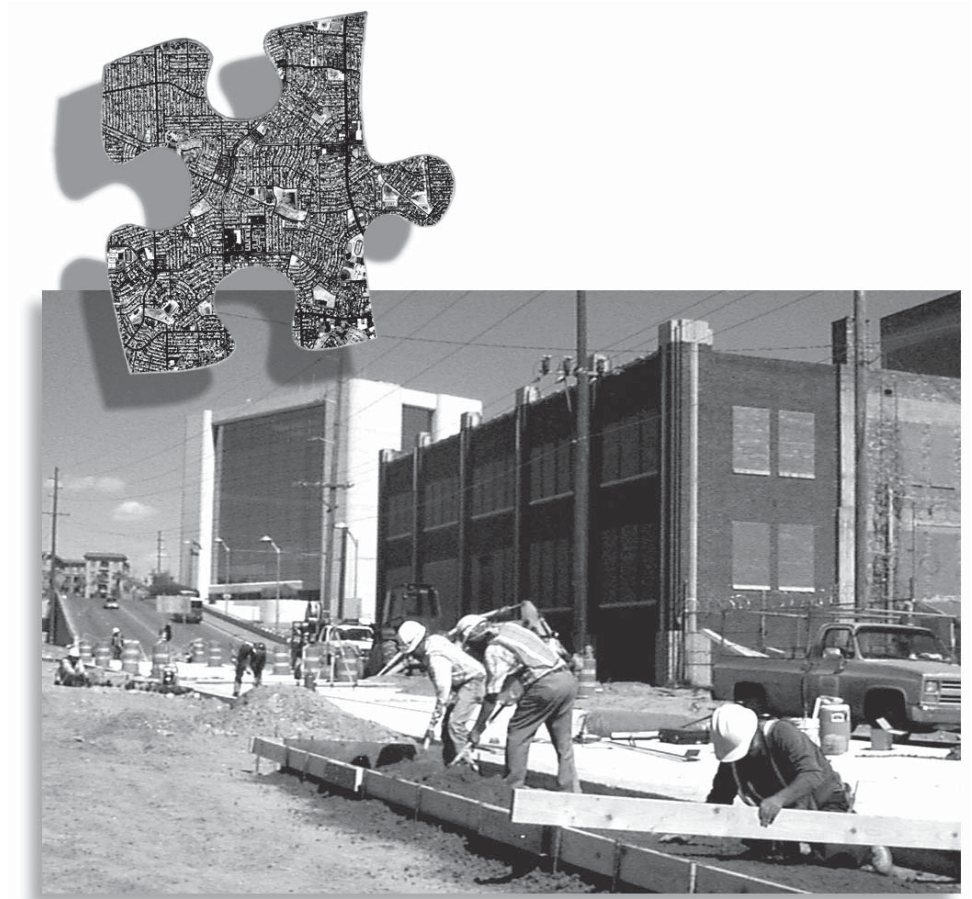


Implementation

DREAM

PLAN

REALIZE



The Plan establishes a foundation of information, analyses, and goals, objectives and policies that provide guidance and recommendations for future action. It is a component of the on-going planning process that guides communities in implementing a long-range plan intended to direct the growth and physical development of the City. It will be useful only to the extent that it is implemented. Implementation will occur as the City and other agencies, developers, business, industry and private citizens take various actions. The processes used to implement *The Plan* fall into two major categories: those applied to the development and use of private property, and those concerned with public property and public services.

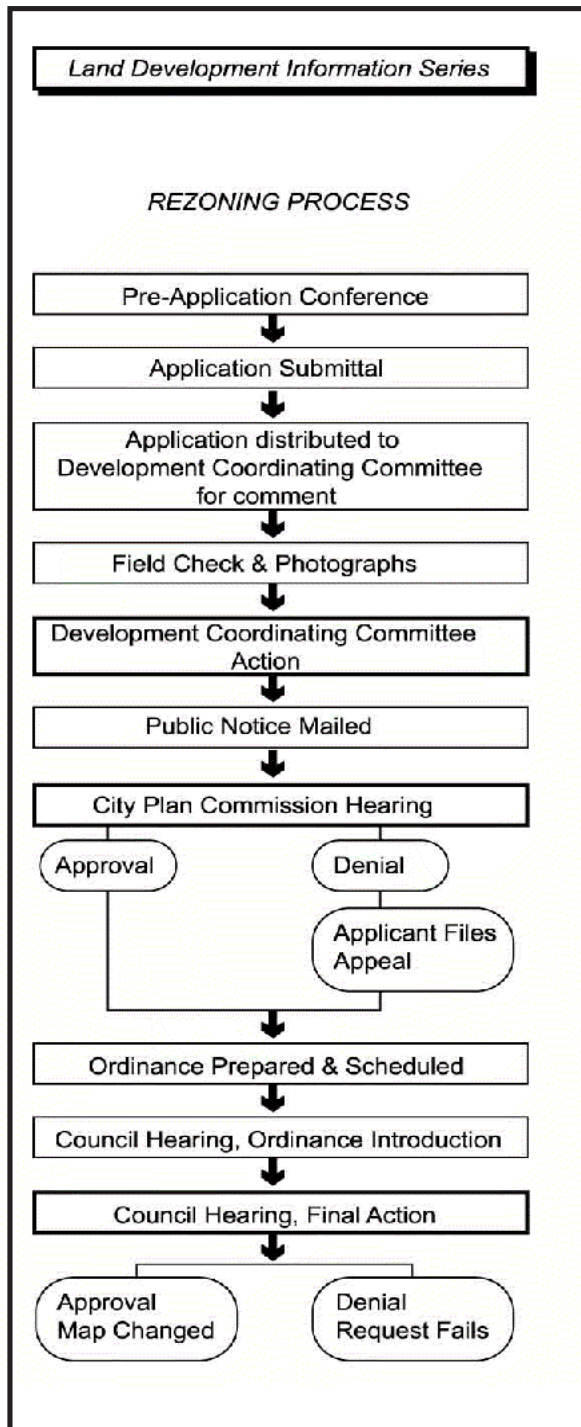
LAND USE REGULATION

Zoning

An essential tool for implementing *The Plan* is the City's Zoning Ordinance. Generally, zoning divides the City into districts and establishes specific provisions regulating the use of property, the height and size of buildings, places limitations on density, and establishes minimum lot area and other requirements. These

provisions are designed to promote public health, safety, and welfare. Through these regulations, an orderly and desirable pattern of land use can be achieved within the City Limits. The zoning process directly implements the land use designations in the Plan. The rezoning of property should ordinarily conform to the Year 2025 General Land Use Maps. Amendments to the zoning map of the City, and to the text regulations, are reviewed by the City Plan Commission and approved by the El Paso City Council. The zoning text is periodically amended to keep pace with developmental changes, and changing principles and techniques. However, the last major amendment to the text was completed in 1979. A major amendment to the Zoning Ordinance is recommended by the Plan, and major areas of study proposed include:

- streamlining the zoning procedures to permit for administrative review wherever possible;
- reexamining off-street parking regulations by specific land use intensity, and requiring location of facilities to complement a pedestrian vs. vehicle environment;
- reexamining requirements for on-premise signage to integrate pedestrian-oriented scale;
- creating a mixed-use district which will integrate land use intensities and densities which are functionally cohesive to encourage linkages of open space and landscaped areas;
- revising and integrating site development standards as part of affordable housing opportunities, including mobile and manufactured housing; and,
- reexamining requirements for site/architectural review.

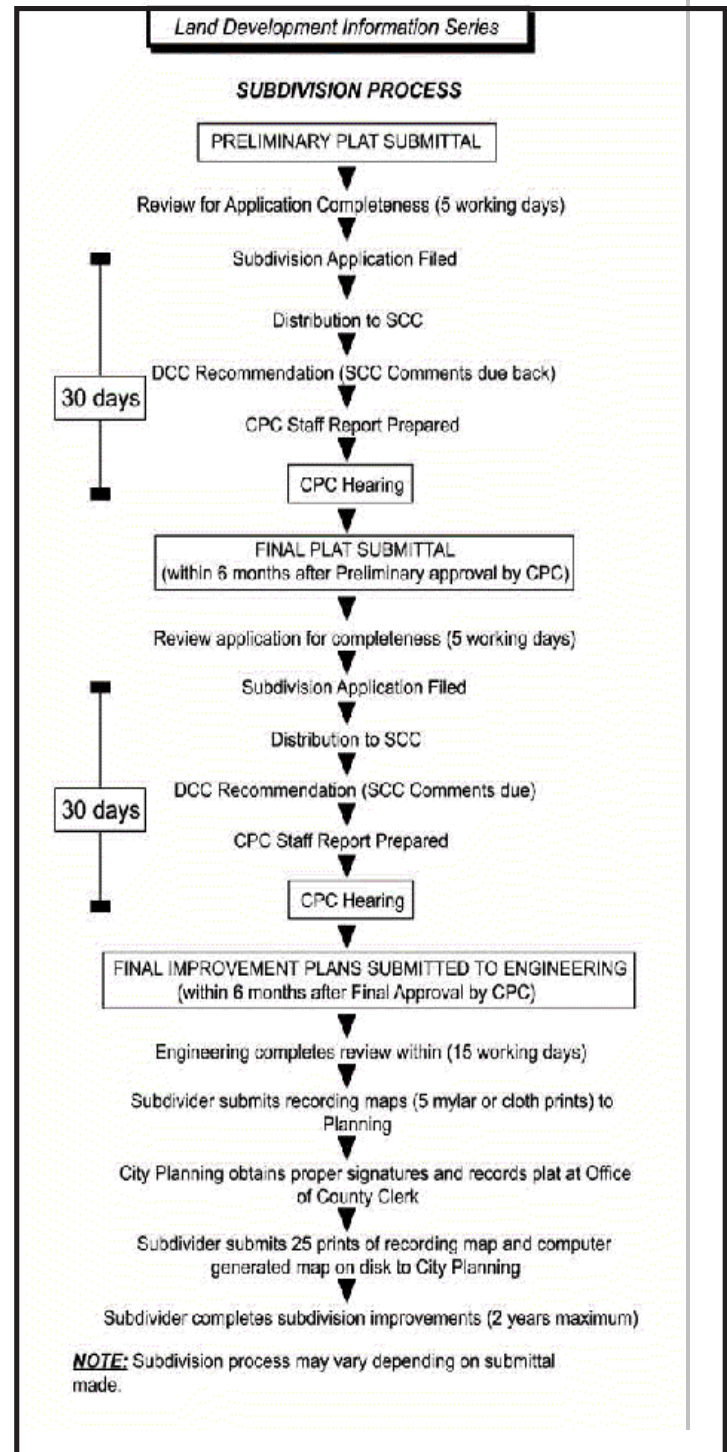


Left: Flowchart of land review process for zoning.

Subdivision

The subdivision regulations establish reasonable requirements and procedures for subdivision of individual tracts of land. Like zoning, the regulations are used to coordinate development in the City, and to protect individuals who purchase subdivision lots by assuring them that the design and improvements installed will meet specific minimum standards. They are intended to assure them that infrastructure and utilities are provided in accordance with plans for growth. The power to regulate subdivisions applies to land within the City Limits and the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). The El Paso Charter charges the City Plan Commission with the duty to approve plats. Acceptance for maintenance of public facilities shown within a duly recorded subdivision are approved by the El Paso City Council. A major rewrite of the Subdivision Ordinance was completed in 1997, and later amended in 1998, which included the following major changes:

- streamlined subdivision process and required timely submissions by subdividers;
- revised street classifications by reducing rights-of-way based on trip generation;
- created flexible design standards for properties within the Mountain Development Area;
- added minimum design standards for properties within the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction;
- revised standards for sidewalk installation;
- created uniform process for parkland dedications through subdivision and off-site allowances; and,
- upgraded design standards for construction of public infrastructure.



Above: Flowchart of land review process for subdivisions.

Frequent analyses of the subdivision regulations will continue to reflect changes in state regulations and local conditions.

Annexation

Annexation is the process by which the City extends its municipal services, regulations, and taxing authority to properties within the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. It is a means of controlling urbanization of contiguous fringe territory by minimizing the effects of unregulated growth. In addition, it ensures the efficient extension of urban services and public infrastructure that support urbanizing areas. The annexation process is established by the Texas Local Government Code and places a number of limitations and requirements. The provisions place stringent service delivery requirements on the City by requiring a service plan of the area to be presented during the public hearing process. The service plan details the extension of public services to an annexed area, and failure to fulfill the plan can result in disannexation. The annexation process furthers the goals and policies of *The Plan* by controlling the incorporation of land into the City Limits. The adoption of an annexation plan outlining proposed incremental phasing is recommended by *The Plan* to complement land use controls and to provide for the efficient extension of municipal services. Annexation of rural land is encouraged to allow the City to guide its development and to reduce costly improvement of sub-standard infrastructure.

Study Area Plans

The El Paso City Council establishes the procedures for the creation and administration of study area plans, as well as the process and criteria for developing other separate policy documents. Approved plans are integrated into *The Plan* to help ensure consistency with the Land Use Goals and Policies, the Year 2025 General Land Use Maps, and to give general support to the objectives of *The Plan*. *The Plan* identifies study areas, in the form of activity centers, activity corridors, and special strategy areas, to be undertaken as part of the ongoing planning process.

Building & Housing Codes

The enforcement of building and housing codes is generally the final phase in the City's development review process. This type of regulation deals with matters of construction, unlike land use controls that deal primarily with the relationship between buildings and land. The building code defines standards that apply to new construction whereas housing codes apply to existing housing and regulate conditions of occupancy. Nationally approved building and housing codes are used as a model in El Paso, and permit the use of materials that are able to meet certain performance standards. These regulations are necessary to control the quality of structures to maintain and restore a good living environment. The building and housing permitting process is ministerial in nature, requiring no public hearings, and implements the site design of a project required by other land use controls.

Plan Review Process

A triennial review process provides an opportunity to update and refine the City Council policy expressed in *The Plan*, and to monitor and evaluate the progress of implementation. Annual review by the City Plan Commission should be incorporated into the CPC process to monitor and evaluate plan implementation. This process is recommended to encourage the City and its residents to evaluate the effects of all recommendations contained within *The Plan*, singularly and in combination. It affords the opportunity to refine the Plan based on changing conditions and community needs. Because public acceptance of the recommendations contained within the Plan is important, public involvement is essential. The amendment process should include community meetings and formal public hearings before the City Plan Commission and City Council. Partnerships should be encouraged between the public and private sectors to effectively address development activities. To keep the plan viable, citizens must support the recommendations contained in the Plan to encourage voluntary compliance with its requirements.

Citizen Participation

The Plan encourages residents to take part in local government decision-making. Members of the public are invited to participate as community representatives on task forces and committees that consider study area plans or other projects of broad community interest. The most common vehicle for such participation is the public hearing process. Opportunities for public participation in the planning process is recommended through community meetings in all phases of the development review process. Public hearings are held before the City Plan Commission and City Council on all zoning-related applications, on text amendments to the zoning and subdivision codes of the City, on reviews of *The Plan* as necessary, and on study area plans which supplement the goals and policies of *The Plan*. Written public notice to property owners is also required during the development review process (zoning-related applications), and owners are invited to hear and comment on applications impacting their neighborhoods. In addition, the City encourages developers to consult with neighborhood groups early in the development review process to resolve potential differences before the public hearing process begins. Strong civic leadership is needed on a continuing basis to publicize the planning process, emphasize its value, and encourage its acceptance as a guide to sound community development.



Above: Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee meeting.



Below: Public meeting in City Council chambers.



Left: Public Meeting Stakeholders.

FINANCING GROWTH

Development Exaction

New growth and development add to the service and facility requirements of the City, as well as other public agencies. Historically, new demand is financed by the operating revenues paid by existing development. The fiscal burden necessary to deliver City services to the new development is generally beyond the capacity of normal municipal revenues. To address these deficiencies, the City has recognized that new capital and facility needs generated by new growth should be financed by the new development, rather than using taxation for the purpose of raising revenues. The added pressure on the City to pay for federal and state mandates has also eroded sources of funding that have traditionally been available for locally identified capital projects.

Recently, codes have been amended to require development to pay for itself. As part of the subdivision platting process, developments are required to construct and dedicate all public improvements directly attributable to the site. This includes street improvements, lighting, fire hydrants, neighborhood parks, storm-water drainage improvements, and the like. To finance the construction and improvement of facilities and infrastructure systems, for which demand for capacity cannot be attributed to a particular development, the City may need alternative methods of cost-recovery fees through which new growth collectively finances these facilities and systems. Additionally, new taxes may need to be imposed to finance other capital and facility needs generated by growth.

Capital Improvement Program

Funding to implement capital projects proposed within the City may come from various funding sources, including federal, state, local, and private investment. Construction of these public facilities and infrastructure is an important link between the development of the City and the implementation of *The Plan*. It is essential that a long-range financial plan address the location, size and timing of public and private development in the City. An effective method of ensuring an adequate community fiscal plan for the construction of needed facilities and infrastructure is the development of a capital improvement program (CIP). This program will balance revenues, expenditures, and the sequence of construction based on anticipated growth of the City. It provides for a current and future assessment of facilities needs, and prioritizes identified projects. The Plan provides the basis for the design and capacity of public facilities and infrastructure necessary to meet the community's future demand, and recommends that a capital improvement program be prepared, adopted, and implemented by the City.



Transportation Improvement Plan

The Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) is a multi-year program of capital improvements for highways and transit in the El Paso Urban Transportation Study (EPUTS) area. The TIP is prepared by staff of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, in coordination with participating members

Left: Street construction.

of the Transportation Management Area (TMA), according to regulations issued by the United States Department of Transportation. The TIP is developed by the Project Selection Committee, a subcommittee of the Transportation Policy Board (TPB), using the project selection process. Before adoption, the TIP is reviewed by the implementing agencies and is presented at a public meeting for general public review. The TPB adopts the TIP after completion of the



general public review. The TIP is used as a local guide in budgeting funds and programming construction and transit improvements by local officials, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration.

The inclusion of a project in the TIP reflects a consensus of priority needs among locally-elected officials, local transportation agency representatives, and representatives of the Texas Department of Transportation. The TIP is, in effect, a listing of needs, estimated costs, and recommended implementation dates. The TIP may be amended as transportation needs change and as funding levels change.

El Paso is a TMA, an urbanized area with a population of over 200,000, as designated by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. The TMA designation applies to the metropolitan planning area, and its participants in the planning process include: the City of El Paso, El Paso County, Town of Anthony, Village of Vinton, Town of Clint, City of Socorro, Town of Horizon City, Texas Department of Transportation-El Paso District, City of Sunland Park, New Mexico, and the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department.

General Fund Revenues

The authorization for operating and maintenance expenditures, as well as capital improvements, is accomplished through collection of general fund revenues. This is a one-year program for public services and facilities financed through tax collections, bond proceeds, borrowing, and other revenue sources, and is actuated by the adoption of an annual budget by the El Paso City Council.

Borrowing

A financial plan of the City may include financing of certain improvements by borrowing, to be repaid from subsequently collected revenues. Limits for municipal borrowing are state and federally mandated. Bond issuance is one source of municipal funding which is commonly used to finance major capital projects of the City, such as land acquisition and construction for fire and police substations, park development, and street resurfacing. The most common issued by a municipality are general obligation and revenue bonds.

Federal and State Funding

In conjunction with general revenues, various federal and state funding is available for use in funding capital improvements and public services. These sources of revenue are aggressively pursued to offset the cost of improvements paid by the general fund.

Community Development Block Grant

Locally, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is an example of a federal funding source which provides annual grants based on a formula basis. The statutory formula used for determining the amount of an entitlement grant uses several objective measures of community need, including the extent of poverty, population, housing overcrowding, age of housing, and growth lag in relationship to other metropolitan areas.

These grants are awarded to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and the provision of improved community facilities and services. These monies have a targeted priority to activities which either benefit low- and moderate-income persons, or aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight within the community. In addition, activities may be carried out which the City certifies are designed to meet other community development need having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the citizens, and where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs. Activities which do not qualify under these three broad national objectives may not be undertaken with CDBG funding.

Below: Community Park.



Below: Adult Literacy Center.



Above: Residential construction using Community Development grants.

Transportation Equity Act

On June 9, 1998, the President signed into law PL 105-178, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) authorizing funding for highway, highway safety, transit and other surface transportation programs for the next 6 years. TEA -21 builds on the initiatives established in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), which was the last major authorizing legislation for surface transportation. ISTEA established a requirement for a statewide transportation planning process. Among other factors, the economic, energy, environmental, and social effects of transportation decisions must be considered in the planning process. The ISTEA strengthened the metropolitan planning process by giving more emphasis to intermodal planning and coordination with land-use planning and development. TEA-21 combines the continuation and improvement of current programs with new initiatives to meet the challenges of improving safety as traffic continues to increase at record levels, protecting and enhancing communities and the natural environment as we provide transportation, and advancing America's economic growth and competitiveness domestically and internationally through efficient and flexible transportation.

Tax Abatement

Tax abatement is an increasingly popular incentive used to attract industries to municipalities. Tax abatement programs allow for the abatement of property taxes, in a standardized and programmatic way, for manufacturing or heavy commercial projects involving multi-million dollar construction of new facilities or improvements to existing facilities. These programs generally set detailed eligibility requirements which can include location within a well-defined area in a municipality or a preferred industry for the entity offering the abatements. Tax abatement serves to create, retain or expand employment opportunities within a study area, and/or to attract major investment to designated zones which would contribute to economic development goals. A tax abatement program would need to identify specific reinvestment zones within the City.

Enterprise Zone Program

The Texas Enterprise Zone Program in El Paso is designed to provide municipal and state sales tax and corporate franchise tax incentives to companies that express a commitment to Texas communities. Its purpose is to enhance employment opportunities by stimulating private investment. Refunds on state sales tax for qualified purchases and credits on corporate franchise taxes may be available to qualifying businesses locating in an enterprise zone. Additionally, incentives such as refunds of local sales tax, property tax abatements, and streamlined permitting may also be available. The Department of Economic Development pre-qualifies prospective businesses to determine the number of jobs created and sustained, and whether the application continues to the state. A company receiving designation by the Texas Department of Economic Development as an enterprise project will be requested to conduct hiring through the Texas Workforce Commission.

Federal Enterprise Community Program

The El Paso Enterprise Community is a federal program that assists individuals living in economically distressed areas in El Paso as designated. The purpose of the program is to revitalize specific areas in the community by providing them with social and economic development services that have been severed by urban growth. The Federal Enterprise Community is comprised of 12.5 square miles in the Northeast and Lower Valley sections of the City. This program incorporates a Federal Tax credit to reduce the federal tax liability for private, for profit employers hiring youth who reside in the Enterprise Community. The program itself offers customized job training opportunities for area residents and provides companies a better trained labor force by training zone residents at company facilities.

Foreign Trade Zone

A foreign trade zone (FTZ) is a site within the U.S., in or near a U.S. Customs port of entry, where foreign and domestic merchandise is allowed to enter without a formal Customs entry or the payment of Customs duties or government excise taxes. These zones offer a wide variety of locations for potential industrial users in the east, central, and the northeast areas of the El Paso. Growing international trade and the influx of co-production activity related to the North American Free Trade Agreement is expected to increase FTZ participants and activity. Merchandise qualifying for FTZ benefits usually originate in Mexico, Canada, and the United States, although merchandise from other countries also enter the FTZ. FTZ activity will provide growth economically for participants doing business in the area.

Empowerment Zone

The Empowerment Zone is a designation for areas located in central and the lower valley of El Paso as target areas for economic revitalization and redevelopment per Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designation. Strategically the Empowerment zone places a heavy emphasis on economic opportunity, human development, and sustainable neighborhoods. The funding will be used to prepare the EZ residents for employment and better paying jobs, to promote job creation through business development and to strengthen the character of the EZ neighborhoods through infrastructure improvements and the provision of social services and housing opportunities. Other areas targeted specifically are vacant industrial park space, Brownfield areas, and potential tourist attractions located in the City. Included in the Empowerment designation for the City is additional tax exempt bond authority to be used to create economic opportunity for the area residents and businesses within the Zone.